

REMARKS

Status of Claims

The Office Action mailed December 2, 2005 has been reviewed and the comments of the Patent and Trademark Office have been considered. Claims 1-9 were pending in the application. Since no claims have been cancelled or added, claims 1-9 remain pending in the application and are presented for reconsideration.

A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Prior Art Rejections

In the Office Action, claims 1-4 and 6-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 6,718,368 to Ayyadurai (hereafter "Ayyadurai") in view of U.S. patent 6,784,899 to Barrus et al. (hereafter "Barrus"), in further view of U.S. Patent Publication Application No. 2003/0208434 to Posner (hereafter "Posner"), in further view of Microsoft® Outlook 2000 (hereafter "Outlook"). Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ayyadurai, in view of U.S. patent 6,651,217 to Kennedy et al. (hereafter "Kennedy"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Each of the independent claims recite, *inter alia*, a method (or system/software) of processing an inbound document sent by a particular trading partner which automatically determines a set of candidate reply transactions associated with the inbound document and the particular trading partner that sent the inbound document without performing a language analysis of the content of the inbound document. These claimed features are supported in the specification, for example, at page 5, lines 25-30. At least these recited features are not disclosed or suggested by the applied prior art for at least the following reasons.

As acknowledged in the office action, Ayyadurai (the primary reference) does not disclose feature of automatically determining a set of candidate reply transactions associated with the inbound document and the particular trading partner without performing a language analysis of the content of the inbound document. To cure this deficiency, the office action

relies on Barrus. However, Barrus also does not disclose automatically determining a set of candidate reply transactions (associated with the inbound document and a particular trading partner) without performing a language analysis of the content of the inbound document.

The cited portion of Barrus, col. 22, lines 39-57 merely show that *a method of delivery of the reply message* may be determined based on a profile of the user or based on a default profile. Therefore, Barrus discloses that “[e]ach user 102 preferably has a profile defining the *preferred method of delivery...*” See col. 22, lines 46-47. Likewise, Barrus discloses that a default profile would deliver the response in a similar manner to which the message was received. See col. 22, lines 46-49 of Barrus. Therefore, Barrus only teaches that a method of delivery of a response may be determined based on a user profile (or a default profile in the absence of a user profile). Clearly, this disclosure has very little to do with the claimed automatically determining a set of candidate reply transactions (associated with the inbound document and a particular trading partner in an e-commerce system) without performing a language analysis of the content of the inbound document. Accordingly, at least this recited feature is not disclosed or suggested by the reasonable combination of Ayyadurai and Barrus.

Since this deficiency is not cured by any of the other applied references, the office action fails to make a *prima facie* case of obviousness with respect to the pending independent claims 1, 8, and 9.

The dependent claims are also patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims on which they ultimately depend. In addition, they recite additional reasons for their patentability when considered as a whole.

Conclusion

In view of the above, applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. An early notice of the same is respectfully solicited. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, or if a petition for extension of time is required for timely acceptance of same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account No. 19-0741 for any such fees; and applicant hereby petitions for any needed extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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